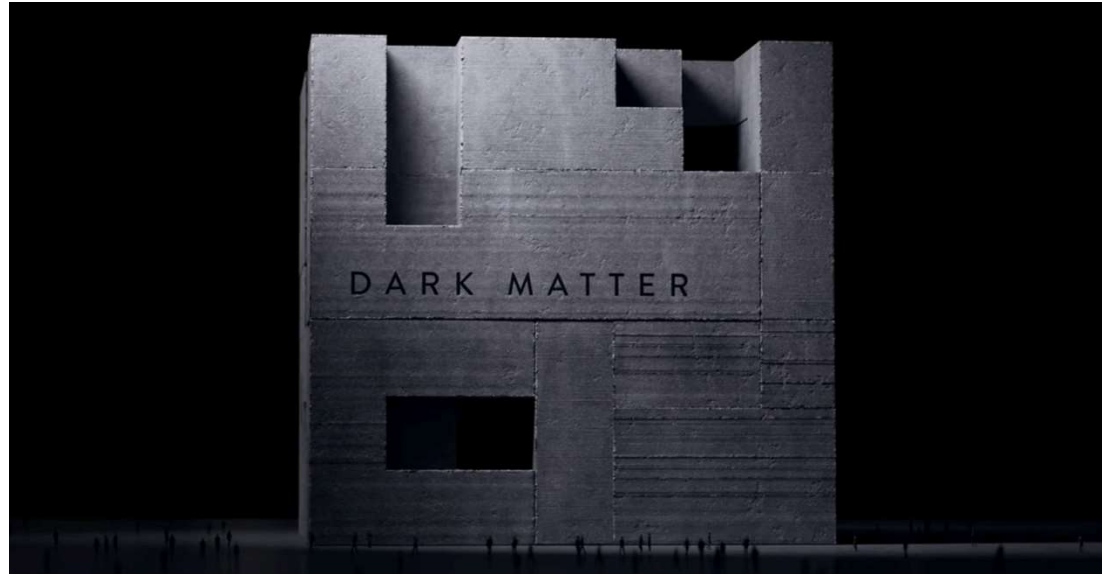


Dark Matter

Numismagram Newsletter #123 (VI/2024)



We're back with our first upload in June, and you may notice that something is just a tad different this time around. In some parallel universe, the idea of sending a newsletter on a weekend may actually be occurring, so we decided, *since today is the beginning of the month, and the beginning of the month (as well as middle of the month) is when we offer new selections on our site*, that we wouldn't delay this until Monday just because the first of the month falls on a weekend. Speaking of parallel universes, that reminds me of a show currently streaming on Apple TV+ entitled *Dark Matter*. Without getting into it too much, it involves the concept of parallel universes as well as paths in life that were not chosen. While preparing this upload, I was struck by the opening credits of the show, as it features an Escheresque arrangement of gravity defying blocks that slowly twist and turn into a larger overall composition—essentially the many paths in life that one could walk, and the disparate outcomes that would thus ensue. Toward the end of the credits, as shown above, the resulting composition is mostly that of a cube, though some cutouts and sections are missing. Interestingly, it bears a great deal in common with this upload's first highlight, a 2001 work from the British Art Medal Society series entitled *Linlithgow Threshold...*



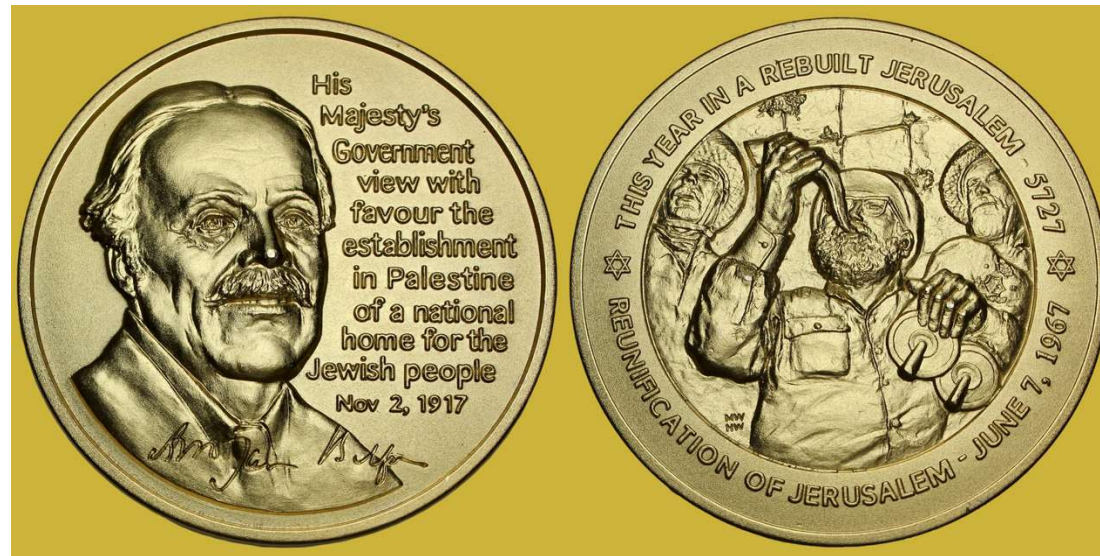
One of just 30 produced, this interesting, free-standing work of medallic art features various insets, cutouts, and crenelations that were inspired by the artist's daily view of Linlithgow Palace near Edinburgh.

Switching to our next highlight, here is a type that we have offered many times in the past. The "hand covering face" satirical type from early 18th century Hamburg could also be construed as a piece from a parallel universe, as seemingly every leading medalist in the region had their own take on the overall design and message. One side always depicts a hand offering forth a coin (or even a handful of them), while the other always depicts a man covering his face. This type exists in gold and silver, as well as different diameters, adding to the parallel nature of the various number of specific types within the series. This particular example, graded **PCGS MS-63**, happens to be one of the most attractive that we have ever seen...



It also is rather intriguing, as we have offered a hypothesis as to its meaning in the past. Namely, this it is tacitly antisemitic in nature, and alludes to the idea that the Jewish population in Hamburg bribed an imperial commissioner in order to gain legal status within the city. While it is difficult to know if this, in fact, was the inspiration for this medal's creation, there are a number of aspects that can certainly lead one to this conclusion.

Moving to another medal that undoubtedly has a Jewish connection, there is this 2017 gilt silver medal designed by Heidi Wastweet...



One of just 50 produced in gilt silver, it commemorates not one, but *three* different anniversaries in 2017—the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration (*which cemented British support for a Jewish homeland in then-Ottoman controlled Palestine*), the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Western Wall, and the 50th anniversary of the American Israel Numismatic Association.

Staying with the theme of religion, there is this silver medal from year XVII (1894/5) of the reign of Pope Leo XIII...



Graded **PCGS SP-64**, and *somewhat undergraded at that*, this stunningly lustrous example has a connection to the British East Indies (India, Burma, and Ceylon), in that it celebrates the founding of the Papal Seminary in British India at Kandy (on what is now the island of Sri Lanka).

Although not a religion per se, the next highlight for this newsletter also pertains to something steeped in customs, traditions, and pageantry: freemasonry...



This extremely interesting silver medal or jeton was issued in 1804 for the founding of the Lodge of the Great Sphinx. Clearly influenced by the discoveries of ancient Egyptian culture during the *then*-recent Napoleonic campaign into Egypt, it likely served as a member's badge or admittance pass into the organization. Graded **PCGS AU-58**, it displays a sphinx on one side, and the Eye of Providence on the other.

Lastly, for something entirely different, here is a rather large (85mm) cast iron medal from 1916 and the middle of World War I...



It pokes a bit of fun at Britain's Lord Cecil and his naval blockade meant to limit the ability for Germany to trade. While the blockade was successful at stopping ships, it was unable to stop that which went underneath, with German submarines, or U-boats, being successful at eluding the blockade. Here, the German medalist compares the submarines to beavers that merely swim under their would-be captors' nets. Already a scarce type, it is very difficult to encounter one so enticing and without issue.



We will be back again on the 15th for another installment of art and historical medals. For all of this upload's new items, please click [here](#) or on the banner art below.



You are receiving this message because you have expressed an interest in our material or have purchased from us in the past.

Pleasanton, Calif
+1 (717) 917-0047

Share on social



Check out our website [→](#)